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Action

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President's statement on Cuba evoked extraordinarily keen interest in Hong Kong.

USIA

NSC

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Local British military sources, apparently acting on basis coordinated collection effort, sought out CONGEN liaison officers for background and information on U.S. moves. Their queries focussed on implications for UK and British shipping. Interestingly, no concern expressed about CHICOM reactions or implications for Hong Kong.

French, German, and Japanese Consular Corps members also queried CONGEN.

Questions and comment about town primarily manifested interest rather than alarm or confusion, but there was some disposition to regard Cuban developments as potentially more explosive than Indian border situation, which had hitherto claimed major share attention. Hong Kong's stock exchange, already reported "nervous" this morning because of Indian border situation, hit by mild selling wave blamed on uncertainty over political developments.

Non-Communist papers followed predictable lines with editorialists apprehensive over increasing international tensions. English-language CHINA MAIL which gave news of message banner headlines, sold out first edition immediately for first time since World War II. Pro-Communist NEW EVENING POST carries news of message and News Agency reports of Caribbean situation without comment, but primary stress still on Indian border developments. LACEY

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